1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
OY2 Easter Islanders OY2



### String Figures

524 Only thirty string figures (*kaikai*)[10] are remembered. The only woman
533 who knew them all was Amelia, the daughter of Tepano, who learned them from her father when she was a little girl. He had meanwhile forgotten them. A few simple string figures were more widely known. Each figure has a special chant which accompanies it. These chants are very popular though most people do not understand their meanings and are generally unable to make the corresponding string figures. All named string figures supposedly represent some object—part of the body (hair, penis), a spearhead (*mata*), a mat, an ahu with stone images, a bay, and so on; some represent characters in a legend, and the accompanying chants are narrated as if spoken by the character at a critical moment.

524 The natives state that string figures were used to memorize popular chants
533 and to recall tales. I was told that children were taught to make them and were obliged to memorize the accompanying chants before they were in-
867 structed in the sacred lore of the tribe and the art of carving tablets. A few
177 string figures with chants have been introduced recently from Tahiti. Their foreign origin was always pointed out by the natives.

### Introduced Toys

524 Bows and arrows were introduced as toys either by Father Roussel or by
177 Easter Islanders returning from Tahiti. The natives call them by a Tahitian
526 name (*fana*) and consider them quite modern. The islanders were acquainted with slings only after their contact with Tahitians. Father Roussel is said to have taught the children to jump rope.

### Gambling

525 The men of the island are passionate gamblers. They play mostly Chilean card games or gamble with pieces of money following the rules of a widespread South American game. Islanders gamble most at the end of the shearing season when they have been paid by the English Company.

## MUSIC AND POETRY

### Instruments

534 Before contact with Europeans the Easter Islanders had only two musical instruments, the percussion plate and the shell trumpet (*pu*). Existence of the shell trumpet is attested only by Beechey (15, vol. 1, p. 48). The name *pu* is included in the early Easter Island vocabularies, though the present natives assert that it was introduced from Tahiti. A stone with a hole in it

[10] Twenty-eight original string figures have been collected and will be published separately with their corresponding chants.